

WEATHER OF THE ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC OCEANS

NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

By F. A. YOUNG

March was an unusually stormy month over the North Atlantic, especially in the middle section of the steamer lanes where gales were reported on from 6 to 10 days.

The pressure distribution over northern Europe was unusual, as at Lerwick anticyclonic conditions prevailed during the first half of the month while from the 16th to 17th the barometer fell rapidly and comparatively low pressure was maintained until the close of the month. As shown in Table 1, the average pressure for the month was 29.89 inches, while the average for the first 16 days was 30.23 inches and for the last 15 days only 29.53 inches.

Prof. Wm. H. Hobbs, of the University of Michigan, has transmitted to the Weather Bureau a radio message received by him from the observers wintering in the vicinity of the Greenland ice cap, in which it is stated that during the first decade of March abnormally warm weather was experienced at their station. Temperatures of from 20° to 39° were recorded and much melting of snow and ice took place.

TABLE 1.—Averages, departures, and extremes of atmospheric pressure at sea level, 8 a. m. (75th meridian), North Atlantic Ocean, March, 1928

Stations	Average pressure	Departure ¹	High-est	Date	Lowest	Date
Belle Isle.....	29.72	-0.08	30.20	12th.....	29.14	2d.
Halifax.....	29.81	-0.09	30.40	7th.....	29.28	31st.
Nantucket.....	29.88	-0.12	30.40	7th.....	29.36	27th.
Hatteras.....	29.99	-0.04	30.38	6th.....	29.50	27th.
Key West.....	30.05	+0.02	30.24	22d.....	29.78	17th.
New Orleans.....	30.02	-0.01	30.36	2d.....	29.70	16th.
Cape Gracias, Honduras.....	29.93	-0.05	29.95	1st. ²	29.84	17th.
Turks Island.....	30.14	+0.12	30.30	2d.....	30.06	15th.
Bermuda.....	30.10	+0.07	30.34	8th.....	29.78	23d.
Horta, Azores.....	30.00	-0.12	30.38	6th.....	29.30	15th.
Lerwick, Shetland Islands.....	29.89	+0.19	30.56	11th.....	29.18	30th.
Valencia, Ireland.....	29.68	-0.22	30.13	5th.....	28.96	30th.
London.....	29.80	-0.16	30.32	16th.....	28.96	30th.

¹ From normals shown on H. O. Pilot Chart, based on observations at Greenwich mean noon, or 7 a. m. seventy-fifth meridian.

² And on other dates.

The number of days with fog was not far from the normal over the Grand Banks and somewhat above along the American coast north of Hatteras. It was unusually prevalent in the western part of the Gulf of Mexico, being reported on 10 days in the 5° square that includes New Orleans. The eastern section of the steamer lanes was practically clear, as well as the greater portion of the coast of Europe.

During the first three days of the month two well defined depressions were over the ocean, accompanied at times by winds of almost hurricane force. On the 3d

the eastern disturbance was central near Madeira and strong northerly gales prevailed over the region between that island and the Azores.

On the 6th northwesterly gales were reported from a limited area in the central section of the steamer lanes but they quickly decreased in intensity, as on the 7th moderate weather was the rule generally.

On the 9th St. Johns, Newfoundland, was near the center of a Low, with westerly gales in the southerly quadrants.

On the 14th the western Low of the preceding day, as shown on Chart XI, was central near 40° N., 38° W., and moderate to strong gales were encountered as far south as the thirtieth parallel, where they prevailed until the evening of the 15th.

From the 17th to 20th stormy weather was the rule over the middle and eastern sections of the ocean and on the 17th there was also a well developed Low over the Gulf of Mexico. The latter moved slowly northeastward along the American coast, accompanied at times by winds of gale force, and on the 22d was central near Belle Isle, although by that time moderate winds only were reported.

On the 22d strong westerly to northwesterly gales were again encountered between the fortieth and fiftieth parallels and the fifteenth and fortieth meridians.

On the 23d and 24th a Low over Newfoundland was responsible for heavy weather over a limited area southward as far as the Bermudas.

Mr. W. Salmon, third officer, British S. S. *Alvarado*, Capt. F. H. Grant, en route from Puerto Colombia to New York, reports that on the 26th the ship encountered a well defined line squall that reached its greatest intensity at 4 p. m. The noon position of the *Alvarado* was 27° 46' N., 74° 16' W. There was also a number of squalls on the afternoon of the 27th; noon position 31° 50' N., 74° 32' W. The heaviest of these squalls was accompanied by thunder and lightning, with falling pressure and temperature; maximum force of wind, 5.

The following note was received from the American S. S. *Beaconlight*:

March 26, 10 a. m., position 29° 31' N., 77° 52' W., bearing about 180°, 5 miles distant, after a heavy rain squall, noticed a large waterspout making up, which afterward separated into four small spouts. Wind variable, force 5, passing rain squalls continued for an hour with heavy thunder and lightning.

On the 27th there was a depression central near New York that moved northeastward along the coast and on the 29th was over Newfoundland. On the 28th southwesterly gales were reported near 37° N., 60° W.

From the 29th to 31st westerly to northerly gales occurred between the twentieth meridian and European coast. On the 31st Eastport, Me., was near the center of a Low and moderate northerly gales were reported by a number of vessels, the storm area extending as far south as Key West.